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OF THE COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

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EDUCATION OR SPECIAL TRAINING

The threadbare argument of Liberal versus Vocational Education might be simplified if we could get rid of the old terminology. This statement seems to put me in the camp of the Semanticists because I am sure that the conventional terms have tied us up to certain patterns of thinking whenever we open that old debate. But the fundamental question is not a dead one and takes on new life with each new decade.

If we college people could give fuller value to the term "Education" whenever we use it, meaning that process which aims to develop in a man all of his capabilities to their fullest possible extent, then we could think of the preparation of a man for a specific task not as "Education" but as "Special Training."

Our worlds of business and of politics, and our organized society in general, are unfortunately crowded with men who have been Specially Trained but are not Educated. I have tried to prove this point in my book on the colleges, that we have lately been sending out more and more men narrowly trained for insurance and banking and railroad management and the law, and even for teaching, who become leaders in those fields, and yet they are only half-educated. Too many of our leaders who face the critical problems of today are uneducated men with a Special Training which is hopelessly narrow however technically thorough it may have been. In fact, the more thorough it was the narrower the man became.

The leader of a great union and the chairman of a vast industry who receives a salary to indicate that he is a super-man, can quibble for months while the public suffers and finally arrive at a solution which was proposed in the beginning of the struggle by some educated fellow in the labor department who never was specially trained for anything but common-sensical living. The presidents of our railroads, suddenly faced by the question as to why is it impossible for a citizen to travel

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GENEROUS RECEPTION OF CEA

Lehigh University has received the College English Association most generously. In the name of the officers and directors the Executive Secretary takes the opportunity of the first NEWS LETTER published at Lehigh to express appreciation to President Martin W. Whitaker for the University's cordial hospitality.

TO HIS ATOMIC MISTRESS

Since Marvell's time, more world, I will admit,
Is ours for coy invention; utmost space
Invented marvels span, as you submit,
Bringing the television of your face.
Jet-propelled I come through worlds unknown
Bidden by love's known power and high octane,
Or over states and kingdoms telephone
Giving you world enough to cause me pain.
The poets once anatomized their wait
And atomized the molecules of love,
But stranger truth than fission is our fate
To vaporize and mushroom us above.
Thus though science has our scope enlarged,
Time's winged chariot now is supercharged.

Albert Howard Carter,
1027 N. Fillmore St.,
Arlington, Virginia.

DECEMBER MEETING OF CEA

The College English Association will have a dinner meeting in Washington, D. C., on Sunday, December 29, 1946, at approximately 6:00 P. M., at the Burlington Hotel. The Burlington is two blocks from the Statler, which is headquarters for the MLA meetings. The program to follow the dinner will be announced in the October issue of the NEWS LETTER.

TYPES OF READING AND WRITING

If we are to proceed on the theory that "reading and writing should not be the sole concern of English departments," it becomes necessary to define what types of activities might be included under those familiar terms. The following suggestions are offered for discussion both by English teachers and teachers in other faculties who are interested in this proposition. Such a common meeting ground of definition is surely a sine qua non for intelligent cooperation: if historians, economists, biologists, and physicists are asked to collaborate in the teaching of English, they at least have the right to be told what sorts of things are expected of them.

The issue is not one of subject matters, but of their expression and interpretation. Thus, the authors of the proposed curriculum yield the palm, or at least equal standing, to other subjects with respect to student interest; stu-

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APPOINTMENT BUREAU

The Association's Appointment Bureau will have quarters at the Statler Hotel December 27, 28, 29, and 30. Members wishing to use the Bureau are advised to register early. Appointing officers are invited to consult the Bureau for recommendations. It is hoped that members will spread word of the Bureau. The more it is used the more useful it will be.

For deans and department heads who wish to strengthen English staffs at the middle and upper levels, the Bureau can make attractive recommendations of teachers with excellent training, successful experience, and publications. A selected list of registrants follows:

Man, Ph. D. Yale, 17 years experience, Linguistics, Creative Writing, 16th Century.

Woman, Ph. D. Texas, 20 years experience, Am. Lit., Writing.

Man, Ph. D. Iowa, 8 years experience, Am. Lit., 20th Century Lit., Criticism.

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COLLEGE INDIFFERENCE

The incredible degree of illiteracy of college freshmen leads many college professors to attack the poor teaching in our grade and high schools, both public and parochial. In the main, adverse criticism seems justified.

I hesitate, however, to put most of the blame on teachers of English in the lower schools. I have had enough experience in teaching English in junior and senior high school to appreciate the problems of those teachers. They have so many classes each day, so many pupils in each class, and often so many extra-curricular activities to supervise, that it is a mental and physical impossibility for them to grade frequent written assignments by all their students. Consequently, grade and high school pupils do not get sufficient practice in written English to be able to master the rules and variations of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

What is the remedy? Is it more painstaking and conscientious teachers? To some degree, this may be true. But, in general, the solution seems to be the recognition by school boards and administrators of the fact that teachers of English must have fewer hours in the classroom if they have time to criticize and grade written compositions. This is true of college instructors as well as high school teachers. We learn to write by writing. Students overcome errors only if teachers point them out and see that pupils correct them.

But, more important, I have noted another factor which I believe contributes largely to the degree of illiteracy of college men. It emerged definitely as a result of an experiment which I made during the fall and winter term of 1945-1946 at Case School. This experiment had several steps.

First, I warned the students in my five first and second semester freshman classes in English that on their last weekly theme of the semester, which would be a book review, any instances of three types of common mistakes in grammar, especially frequent in

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THE NEWS LETTER

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CLEARLY AND SIMPLY

"We complain that our students cannot say what they mean clearly and simply," remarked a well-known professor recently, "but we forget that only one man in English literature could write that way—Jonathan Swift." Certainly the mind is rare which can so fuse thought and language, but those of less wit may achieve a style superior to the "clutter of complex qualifications," * the timid, wooden Ph. D. manner, or the studied preciosity common to academic prose. Men of intelligence may be trained to write effectively just as they may be trained to investigate accurately. They may develop a good style just as they may develop a knowledge of English literary history or a respect for scientific fact. Even the poorly prepared freshman writes markedly better in June than he did in September.

But his teacher, if he knows how to write a workmanlike prose, has almost certainly trained himself. Too often he merely follows a textbook and complains that his students cannot say what they mean clearly and simply. His graduate school has shirked its plain duty to teach him the craft which he is expected to teach others; and he generally need not even demonstrate craftsmanship as a writer to qualify for appointment.

A well-trained teacher may do much to establish for his classes the standards of good prose, but unless his students are held to those standards throughout their college course, their training in composition becomes merely an isolated discipline of little permanent value. Any effort to extend the discipline beyond the English department can have only good results. But before English teachers make proposals to their colleagues, it might be well to examine critically the shrugging relativism now so popular in answering the question, "What is good English, anyway?"

THE CEA CRITIC

An officer of the Association suggested the name CRITIC, and a director proposed inclusion of the initials CEA in the title. But a former director has expressed vigorous disapproval. The Executive Secretary Emeritus feels that the suggested title is a good one, and appropriate if the Association's publication should expand. Comments from members: "I happen to prefer some neutral title like Bulletin . . . I would not put 'CEA' in the title, either." — "While I am writing, I shall cast my 'vote' for the new name." — "As to your proposed new title, I like 'The Critic' very much; but why stick in anything besides that?" Comment still invited. The desirable time to change is at the beginning of a new volume, January, 1947.

WANTED — VINEYARD LABORERS

Where may be found young men and women capable of teaching the new liberalized curriculum so persistently urged by modern educators, from Alexander Meikeljohn on? For one western institution this question voices now a practical dilemma. Inspired by the well-presented humanistic - social goals of the S.P.E.E. committee on post-war curricula, and with the connivance of the English department, its college of engineering has instituted a four-year sequence of studies designed to introduce technical students to the humanities. But, as for suitable instructors—assuredly, the technical schools have not been the only ones to graduate specialists. If the reader is inclined to raise his eyebrows, let him consult the results of the Graduate Record Examination for the liberal-arts students in his own institution.

Young these instructors must be, in enthusiasm and in energy; if, like our own Burges Johnson, they have maturity and experience, their student will be unusually fortunate. Both as evidence of ability for serious, independent, work, and to ensure undivided attention to their teaching, they must have their doctorate. Through the habit of omnivorous reading, they must keep well abreast of the times in all major fields, providing for their students the concrete example of a man well read, familiar both with the classics and with the contemporary scene. In implementing these new courses, they must be willing to experiment, to labor long hours in preparing materials which will present, in broad outline, the whole field of knowledge, effecting a synthesis of art and science, literature, history, and philosophy. This can be done; Hardin Craig has well pointed out that an intelligent person can master the broad essentials in any field.

Importantly, also, in this work, they must use the new techniques. The time-tested lecture method and the indispensable writing of themes require much supplementation by audio-visual aids, by multitudinous brief outlines, by ten-minute quizzes, and by standard—or, more often, improvised—objective tests. Later on, of course, all such material will become available; at present the instructor must make up most of his own. As some of you may recall. Professor Jones of the University of Texas has given some practical hints as to the making of film-slides; excellent phonograph records are already obtainable, and every institution has mimeographing facilities. Now, all that seems lacking is ambition, time, and the inevitable elbow grease.

The college of engineering earlier referred to is consolidating the results of its experimentation to date within a slender four-year core curriculum. This begins in the freshman year with the correction of technical papers, followed by a one-hour course in the writing of engineering reports. In the sophomore year, three one-hour courses briefly cover the essentials of expository writing, of writing to persuade and convince, and a study of style. In the junior year, Humanities I, II, and III are given three hours apiece. The first treats of the earth, astronomically and geologically, of the life upon it, as noted by biologist and anthropologist, and of the beginnings in Oriental civilizations. The second swiftly reviews Western civilization, and the third seeks to give a picture of the complex present. In the senior year three one-hour courses endeavor to round out the student's knowledge, to introduce him to a few more great writers, and to plan with him for continued reading after graduation. As these courses swing into action, they will require a larger staff.

Where can we find instructors capable of providing today's citizens — world citizens — with adequate data? versatile enough to utilize the modern teaching methods essential in covering so much material in so limited a time? sufficiently clear-visioned to recognize and to seize developing opportunity?

Surely some graduate students have been won over by the thoughtful writers on "liberal education" during the past ten years.

A. V. Hall,
University of Washington.

POETRY IS WHERE THE POET IS

Here in this room where "Seminar" in gold
Is stenciled on the door (this tabled place
Well-chaired to range twelve writers face to face),
The fellows of the craft: who language hold,
Its pliant use and meaning manifold,
To be the pinnacle of conscious grace
In learning's edifice. Verse unextolled
Is latent in this academic space.
Here in this pleasant college cubicle
With elbows resting on the polished wood
The fellows and the master smile and nod
Along the room and toward the table's T.
The working faith of all is rubrical:
Sufficient be their stroke for poetry.

—August H. Mason,
University of Alabama.

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* W. M. Kiplinger, "The Saturday Review," July 27, 1946, p. 25.

I'VE BEEN READING

Members are invited to contribute reviews of books, old or new, which they wish to call to the attention of other English teachers. Professor J. Gordon Eaker is now Head, Department of English, Jersey City Junior College, Jersey City, New Jersey.

THE SCHOLAR AND THE RESEARCH LIBRARY OF THE FUTURE, by Fremont Rider (Hadham Press, New York, 1944).

Despite its forbidding title, this book is a thriller. Far more than a study of library technique, it poses serious considerations for the future of higher education. The basic premise is that libraries obviously cannot continue the doubling of their holdings every sixteen years. At this rate Yale Library in another century would have two hundred million volumes occupying over six thousand miles of shelves, and books would be coming in at the rate of twelve million a year.

As a solution, Mr. Rider proposes "microcards," i.e., standard-size catalog cards with the book micro-recorded on the reverse side. The process is simple: two copies of the text are pulled apart and the pages spread out in order so that a photograph of the entire book may be taken in a single frame. This photograph is reduced and printed on the catalog card. The student who wishes to use this "book" may remove the micro-card, leaving a memorandum card in its place, and project it in a reading machine. These machines are to be omnipresent and more constantly in use than typewriters or telephones.

Mr. Rider believes that scholars generally will have to re-think their entire work in terms of micro-materials, "which are far more different from books than flat books were different from the papyrus and vellum rolls that preceded them."

Will micro-cards do away with books altogether? Mr. Rider is careful to point out that they will not. Libraries will retain such facilities as reference books and browsing collections. Furthermore, micro-cards could not include books or periodicals in copyright except through arrangements not yet worked out.

Clyde S. Kilby,
Wheaton College (Ill.)

THE TREASURE CHEST — An Anthology of Contemplative Prose, edited by J. Donald Adams (E. P. Dutton and Company, 1946, 402 pages, $2.50).

The chief virtue of this volume, arranged by authors in chronological order, is that it puts within reach the famous passages that everyone needs for daily use. When you want that familiar quotation and want it quick, and can't find it anywhere else, you will find it here. Readers will agree with Mr. Adams that prose can be anthologized and quoted as well as poetry.

J. G. E.

CHIEF PATTERNS OF WORLD DRAMA, edited by William Smith Clark II (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1946).

"Chief Patterns of World Drama" is an ably chosen and edited anthology of twenty-nine great plays. The introductions to individual plays are excellent, giving not only essential information about the lives and careers of the dramatists, but also discussing the theatrical and literary milieu in which each wrote. Taken together, they form a running history of world drama, presenting most of the background material necessary for an intelligent reading of the plays. Both the introductions and the notes reveal an intelligent use of recent scholarship. As a help to suggesting different methods of dramatic production, drawings of typical Greek, Roman, and Elizabethan theaters have been included. This volume should become a valuable textbook for college courses in world drama.

Edward H. Weatherly,
University of Missouri.

THE PRACTICAL COGITATOR or THE THINKER'S ANTHOLOGY, selected and edited by Charles P. Curtis, Jr., and Ferris Greensleet (Houghton Mifflin and Co., 577 pages, indexed. $3.00).

Every English teacher would like to have on his desk this book of excerpts from modern thinkers. The first hundred pages deal with thought itself, its discipline and technique, and its relation to action and conduct. In twelve later sections man solicits his past in history, turns to nature, scrutinizes her and himself, lives with his fellows, betters their conditions, seeks justice, beauty, and friendship, and finally takes better aim.

The selections have a strong modern tone, but the ancients are not neglected. Emerson and Oliver W. Holmes, Jr., lead in the number of quotations. Dewey and Whitehead have their share, and the editors have done a fine job in gleaning from wise men everywhere. It is a book to dip into as into a book of poetry, according to one's mood, but it makes easy straight reading also. I recommend it highly.

J. G. E.

A COLLEGE PROGRAM IN ACTION — A review of working principles at Columbia College, by the Committee on Plans (Columbia University Press, 1946, $2.00).

Columbia College is generous to share its experience with admissions, organization, tenure, and its general education program. The first half of the book is addressed to the faculty; the last half gives its program—in contemporary civilization, the humanities, and science. Columbia prides itself on being the first college to introduce a thorough reading of the great books in a program started by Professor John Erskine, though the course in contemporary civilization is the oldest. Real progress is being made at Columbia toward integrating physics, chemistry, astronomy, and biological sciences in a general course.

The report recommends that English composition should be taught by all teachers if effective progress is to be made. The English department, of course, should be responsible for the fine points. The sections on foreign language are a bit optimistic about the accuracy in foreign speech resulting from the Army Specialization Training Program. The report recommends that students study languages in the summer or take an intensive, ten-hour freshman course and regain lost time later. Physical education is recommended for all four years. Good advice is given about an honors course; and an attractive course in the appreciation of music is outlined. The report includes the original "Erskine list" of forty books, which continues to be in demand. On the whole, the book should clarify educational planning in many colleges.

J. G. E.

CURRENT OPINION

Herrick C. Judson, one of the numerous scientists now endeavoring to bridge the gulf brought about by disproportionately swift advances in Western science, would extend the scientific method to include humanistic values. The opportunities and obligations of empirical science, he says in the **American Scientist**, April issue, go beyond mere "factual knowledge validated by verifiable experiment and arranged in a coherent system"; they properly relate not only to social facts, but — since these too have causes and consequences — to human interests, needs, and satisfactions. In the social sciences, the values inherent in all nature are key factors, for important movements must be supported voluntarily.

Man, then, he concludes, must consciously evolve. Already he has done so in technology; his next conquest must be in the realm of his own cravings, ambitions, and

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THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT

Members of the College English Association owe a vote of thanks to President Van Doren's Curriculum Committee for preparing the report published in the NEWS LETTER for March. I am sorry I could not attend the New York meeting, April 10, to hear the report discussed. Along with the Harvard Committee Report **(General Education in a Free Society)**, the CEA Committee Report has been helpful in establishing new emphases in the required English courses at the University of New Mexico.

In our planning for the second semester course of the first year, we are introducing a study of the fundamental values in the types of literature, with such a guide as Brooks, Purser and Warren, **Approach to Literature** (1942), supplemented by one or two inexpensive reprints of great novels. For the sophomore year the Arts and Sciences curriculum here now specifies an elective three hours in literature, which may be chosen among World Literature, Modern Literature, several courses in American Literature, and the Survey of English Literature (primarily for majors and minors). In the revised Arts and Sciences requirements we shall ask for six sophomore hours of English in each student's program. Whether to establish a simple six-hour course of basic great literary works or still to permit a student to elect part or all of it, is under debate in the Department. We simply report agreement with the CEA Committee in its effort to place the study of the best literature at the heart of the English offerings in General Education.

The most important point of dissent I feel, to state the case briefly again (see the NEWS LETTER, January, 1946), is in the Committee's attitude toward the "direct method" in the teaching of composition. We shall still require a three-hour first semester course in composition and although a book of readings is an adjunct to the course, I still believe the "direct approach" the only vital way to teach composition. Professor Van Doren and his colleagues put their point of view rather strongly: the "direct approach in the teaching of writing" is teaching "in vacuo"; "the ordinary student is not in the normal position of the writer, a person who has something he wants to say." The vacuum is therefore inferred to be the student's mind. He has nothing he wants to say. I disagree. Everyone has a good deal he wants to say at every stage of his life. He tries to say it in endless ways, not only in words, but by deeds. The student wants to say things just as much as does the professional writer. His words may not be as important to a reading public, but they are important to him, and he may, in time, learn to say them in ways important to a reading public. It is a misconception of creative writing to aver that a student can be given things to say; the things are there. An imaginative and skilled teacher shows a student what is within him and helps him to say these things with technical skill. We can say things about something we read, but to call our own experiences "vacuum" and something in a book "substance" is to miss the boat completely in the teaching of composition. Let the CEA Committee remember Shakespeare's words about "painfully poring upon a book to seek the light of truth, while truth the while doth falsely blind the eyesight of his look."

T. M. Pearce,
University of New Mexico.

EXPERIENCE IS AN ARCH

The curriculum report published in the NEWS LETTER for March seems to me to ignore some of the realities of the freshman and sophomore mind. I refer especially to the recommendation that students be required to write about their reading—that is, about other people's ideas instead of their own experience. This plan would ingrain more deeply some of the commonest intellectual vices connected with the use of language. The average freshman who really needs to be taught writing comes from a high school in which "research" means copying a few paragraphs or scattered sentences from the encyclopedia. College, of course, is stiffer: in writing a "research paper" he is required to copy from at least four books instead of one. If the instructor scares him in advance about plagiarism, he may distort the sentence and paragraph structure of his sources, or at best concoct a weak soup by stirring their data and terminology about in the murky liquid of his own misunderstanding. And if the instructor asks him to hand in a short theme based on the "readings"—literary or Philistine—he hands in a series of vague, inaccurate, and unoriginal generalizations that would make Quiller-Couch turn over in his grave. The student is not by this process learning to write or to read. In order to learn to write he must face the whole problem of expression — putting the raw material of experience into language. If he writes only about experience which has already been organized and verbalized by someone else, he will probably never learn to organize raw data for himself or to put it into accurate language. He will also be a prey to two of the most loathsome mental ailments: (1) He won't know the difference between his own ideas and someone else's. (This is the real root of much student plagiarism.) (2) He won't know the difference between words and ideas. (O lost and by the wind grieved semanticists!)

The alternative is **not**, as the committee implies, an "effort to teach writing **in vacuo**." Any person who has lived eighteen years and does not suffer from chronic amnesia possesses material for writing. This material will not burgeon into A themes merely as the result of casual assignment of "an expository theme for Monday." But it can be brought to light in a properly directed class hour spent on discussion of the assignment. The student will get ideas from his instructor, his classmates, and even from a book. But these ideas will not be the primary material of his theme: they will be the yeast working in the dough of what he knows already; they will help him to discover, organize, and evaluate the materials with which life has already provided him. The best text-book material for such a class hour is neither the conventional book of magazine essays nor a segment of "Paradise Lost." It is something on the order of Don Wolfe's theme-assignment chapters in "Freshman Reports His World," which not only uncover material but teach rhetoric at the same time. Of course a good teacher can start with anything, from Homer to Hemingway, and lead the student back to his own experience; but that is not the committee's idea. The committee proposes to assign texts of great literature so that the student will have something to write **about**. This proposal is not only unsound for the reasons given above, but fantastically inconsistent: the committee posits a vacuum-headed freshman and then expects him to write a critical essay on Dante. Gentlemen, have you tried Dante on any vacuums lately?

There still remains the problem of teaching the average freshman to write the investigative paper. Though the average student will never have occasion to write one after he leaves college, he will probably have to write several in order to graduate, and the other departments expect us to make him expert in the art. Since to the average entering freshman "investigative" means merely "regurgitative," our department has decided to try a new attack on the problem. Next fall our middle-level freshmen will write "non-library" term papers on such subjects as Trees and Shrubs of the Campus, The Domestic Architecture of the ——— Ward, Ownership of Musical Recordings by Albright Students, Reaction of Reading Drivers to Traffic Controls (based on first-hand counts at stop signs, etc.) The data will be gathered in "raw" form by the student himself. It will not have been previously organized or put into words by somebody else. He will not be able to assemble his essay merely by using scissors and paste. He will have to formulate his own classifying concepts and his own generalizations. Incidentally, he will have to learn about such things as scientific sampling and construction of questionnaires. The typical outline will include statement of the problem, description of the method of investigation, classified data, and conclusions. We hope that this project will get the freshman out of his habits of second-hand thinking and writing, and teach him to manipulate facts and ideas instead of somebody else's phrases. In the second semester he will be asked to write a term paper of the standard type, based on material gathered in the library. We hope for some carry-over from the first semester's experience—some ability to digest instead of regurgitate, some ability to organize, manipulate, and express ideas without being an intellectual parasite.

I make no apology for dragging the term-paper problem into a discussion of the committee's proposal to base composition on the classics. In both areas the same issues are involved and the same dangers threaten — dangers that grow more menacing as the fallacy of parasitism is given a blessing by one august body after another.

J. B. Douds,
Albright College.

COLLEGE INDIFFERENCE

(Continued from page 1)

book reviews, would bring the heaviest possible penalty—a failing grade of F for that paper. I told them exactly what sections of their textbook on grammar covered these points. For emphasis, I wrote on the blackboard the crucial rules and examples.

The first error was failure to set off titles of books, magazines, and newspapers by underlining or by enclosing them in quotation marks. The second was the use of the comma before and after the name of a state when it follows a city, and before and after a year when it follows either a month or a day of the month within a sentence. The third was the use of the apostrophe to show either possession or elision. In all these as well as other rules I repeatedly had drilled my classes during the semester.

The second step of my experiment was, in marking the papers, to watch especially for these slips and grade accordingly. The third and last step was to note how many students made these mistakes, and to calculate their proportion to the total number of my pupils who submitted reviews.

The results were shocking. I found that, despite my special warning and review of the rules at issue, thirty-one students out of eighty-one, or about thirty-eight per cent, fell into these elementary errors which they should have learned to avoid before being admitted even to high school. The proportion of men completing their first semester of college work was nineteen out of forty-nine, or about thirty-eight per cent; of those ending their freshman year, twelve out of thirty-two, or thirty-seven and one-half per cent. These figures indicate that an extra semester of college English reduced these simple mistakes only about one-half of one per cent. Under these conditions, grade and high school teachers cannot be held responsible, at least directly, for the poor literary performance of college students.

Why were there so many of these errors? Were they caused by ignorance? No; I had taken care to see that my students would know better. Had I failed to motivate them effectively? Apparently so, and yet I had warned them of a failing grade if they made these specific slips. Besides, all through the semester I had taken various opportunities to present higher motives. I had pointed out repeatedly, with logic and testimony from impressive authorities, that educated men of course must have a mastery of at least their own language; that engineers, such as all my students intend to be, must be able to present their plans and ideas with clarity and force if they are to get credit for them or sell them to others; and that executives, such as many engineers hope to be, especially must be able to convince and influence others by both writing and speaking, if they are to head large enterprises successfully. Yet the same elementary errors continued frequently to appear.

Is the fault mine, as a teacher of English? Unless I throw modesty to winds, I must admit that at least part of it may be mine. But I share the bewilderment of other teachers on all levels who, like me, believe that they have tried earnestly, resourcefully, and intelligently, yet unsuccessfully, to help their students master their own language.

If the fault is not wholly the teachers', whose else is it? I no longer hesitate to pin a large share of it on the students themselves. It is true that mere indolence, or engrossing interests in scientific or "practical" courses, or heavy assignments in other subjects which may occasionally monopolize their time and energy, may account in part for their degree of failure in writing and speaking good English. But when repeated instruction and all kinds of motivation conspicuously fail, as they did in my experiment, the conclusion seems unavoidable that many college men are hopelessly indifferent to mastery of their own language, even though it is their only means of communication with the world of men and ideas.

Wallace P. Rusterholtz,
Case School of Applied Science.

CURRENT OPINION

(Continued from page 3)

ideals. Every human enterprise involves these elements and the scientific means of their attainment, and education provides a means of their more purposive coordination. Explicit direction of the vast resources of scientific skill and equipment toward enrichment of life is needed for enlarging and refining its satisfactions.

A. V. Hall,
University of Washington.

EDUCATION

(Continued from page 1)

from some point east of the Mississippi to somewhere west of it without changing trains, are forced to admit that there isn't any good reason and never has been; and begin suddenly to talk about transcontinental Pullmans. Perhaps some day some educated railroad executive will put on through coaches, and all of the specially trained executives will wonder why it was never done before. For many years the specially trained presidents of the nation's mammoth express companies fought a gentle soul who lived in a New England village and had no special training for anything, but a good general education, and who kept asking the question out loud, —Why should not the government postal service carry packages? But why multiply such incidents? Our national civilization has been victimized at many critical moments by specially trained but actually uneducated leadership.

There is no reason why I should preach these truisms in the CEA NEWS LETTER if it were not for the fact that the teaching of English in our colleges could plan more wisely for itself, if it made a point of thinking in these terms. We have often sacrificed an Education in English, both in reading and in writing, to a narrow Special Training for future English teachers.

Please do not misunderstand me. Nothing I have said decries Special Training; but it will stand the final tests only when it is superimposed upon a broad and solid educational foundation; and the trouble is that nowadays we tend to substitute the Special Training for the Education from the very beginning.

In all of our planning of an English curriculum in the colleges we have allowed our judgment to be clouded by the old-time college curriculum which was in reality a Special Training for the ministry. Later it was broadened a little to become a Special Training also for English teaching. The college student who intended to take up neither of these vocations found himself forced to consider literature with that limited perspective, and to practice writing as though it were a training for homiletics. We still require students to write themes for the classroom when Heaven knows that there is no such thing as a theme in real life. No eager young writer ever submits a theme to a magazine for publication; no love-sick college maiden ever writes a theme to a boy friend overseas. And now, unfortunately, when we are beginning to break away from the conventional theme subjects of the college classroom our teachers find themselves limited again because Special Training for "Journalism" has begun to appear as an "educational" subject and the English teacher becomes self-conscious about it and fearful that some normal and lively assignment may be poaching upon Journalism's preserves.

Much of our division of literature into periods and nationalities and racial groups, and especially our treatment of the earliest beginnings of English writing have been determined by the old assumption that an Education in literature is primarily a Special Training for the teaching of it.

Perhaps the earthquake of this latest war has rattled the dishes on our educational shelves so hard that it has shattered some of them and will force us to radical rearrangements and even to the purchase of a few new platters. The widespread discussion of what to discard and what to put in its place is all to the good, however fantastic some of the discussion may be. Let us hope these informal pages of our NEWS LETTER will be full of it. And any way, let us all remember that throughout most of our teaching hours we should be primarily Educators rather than Special Trainers, if English in the college curriculum is to justify itself.

Burges Johnson,
Union College.

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APPOINTMENT BUREAU

(Continued from page 1)

Man, Ph. D. Hopkins, 15 years experence, Medieval, Victorian, Phi Beta Kappa.

Man, Ph. D. Yale, 4 years experience, 18th and 19th Centuries.

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Woman, Ph. D. Univ. Virginia, 18th and 19th Centuries, Criticism, Shakespeare.

FLAGRANTE DELICTO

Dull and tiring, first cold then hot,
He jabbers, yet he teaches not;
Continually he quotes some sage,
And labors to interpret the age.
With copious notes he plys his trade,
And oft forgets the point he's made.

A system quite completely his—
None knows exactly what it is.
We suffer, and with patient care,
We listen to his clash and blare.
All hope is gone, go rest in peace!
The ones who sleep will suffer least.

—T. F. Marshall,
Western Maryland College.

TYPES OF READING

(Continued from page 1)

dents will be reading and writing about man's life and his world throughout their college careers. Yet it is surely not anticipated that the English department will attempt to compete with the natural and social sciences in their specialties. In what respects then are the jobs of the specialists and the English teachers similar, and in what respects are they different?

Clues to these questions are to be found in the terms "culture," "civilization," and "heightened experience of life" which the Committee saw fit to use in their statements of objectives. These hint at the values which are essential to any liberal education, and which provide the basis for an intelligent division of function in the curriculum. Culture and civilization are words used to indicate the total complex of activities and products which embody our values of truth, good, and beauty; literature, the arts, and the humanities generally are especially concerned with culture in its aesthetic aspects, with the "heightened experience of life" revealed in its beautiful forms.

From these generalizations we come readily to the problems involved in the teaching of English. Thus, it is no accident that the nine "great book" titles quoted by the Committee from the Harvard Report include five poets, one poet-philosopher, one volume of drama, one novelist, and the Bible. It is perhaps natural that students of literature should think of English primarily as a fine art and stress its poetic aspects.

However, from the point of view of the college faculty as a whole, the poetic uses of English are hardly exhaustive. In the above list, a lone novel represents the field of prose, but in its fictional rather than its scientific or critical aspects. Surely English is used, not only for the creation of beautiful forms, but also for the communication of truths and for the expression of critical judgments of value.

If the use of English in other departments of the college is to be improved, this must be done in terms of the functions that the language performs for each of the disciplines. In the sciences, this would include such functions as objective description, classification, definition, and logical analysis. The passion for truth is as essential to the humanistic culture of western civilization as are the visions of its poets, and despite his eloquence we do not read Lucretius today for information about the atom.

A student majoring in the sciences is entitled to some special training in the aspects of English which will be most useful to him; and, since training in scientific method is part of a liberal education, every student should learn about the uses of the language in fields where accuracy and precision are important, as well as in those which embody aesthetic form. If English teachers are not prepared to give such training, that is a deficiency which needs to be remedied: only after they have helped teach students to read and write with an eye and a mind for truth can they with a clear conscience reproach the scientist for not doing the same.

In those subjects which involve moral and aesthetic judgments (the sciences of man and society, and the humanities) there is a third function which English performs and that is the function of criticism. This is the field in which college students of this generation undoubtedly perpetrate the most outrageous abuses. Who has not read freshman themes in which opinionated statements and high-sounding phrases are substituted for intelligent criticism?

In brief, "reading" and "writing" as such are vague and relatively meaningless terms. As English teachers we handle examples of reading and writing for specific purposes, and these can usually be classified as aesthetic, scientific, or critical. Defined in such terms, our function will seem more reasonable to other departments, and requests for cooperation may be more readily acceded to.

This analysis of types of reading and writing suggests possible modifications of the Freshman-Sophomore Course outlined by the Committee. For reading, it suggests less exclusive emphasis on the poets and possible inclusion of great books in the fields of natural science (Harvey, Newton, Darwin), social science (Plato's "Republic," Montesquieu, Gibbon, Mill), and criticism (Aristotle's "Poetics," Dryden, Coleridge). The particular items used would perhaps not be important, so long as the list was well rounded and did not depart from a high standard of excellence; the choices of the "Invitation to Learning" radio program might serve as models in these respects.

For writing, the foregoing a alysis would also imply separa treatments of the creative, scie tific, and critical processes. T composition course, including e mentary principles of gramm and rhetoric, would of course retained, but would be suppl mented by brief discussions a assignments, preferably in co junction with suitable reading intended to give the students son appreciation of the special pro lems involved in each of the typ of writing. Since many of t principles of logic and criticis are identical with those of gra mar and rhetoric, this would i volve no radical departure in t teaching of composition, but sim ply that degree of attention types of subject matter which o highly-specialized (some wou say, over-specialized) faculties d mand.

There is no attempt in the abo to imply that the types of rea ing and writing are "pure" a occur independently of one a other. History is a familiar e ample of a discipline in which th mingle. Yet failure to distingui these elements in historical wri ing has led to many meaningle comparisons. History at its be is at once a science, an art, a an exercise in criticism, and will naturally vary in its style its practitioners emphasize one another of these elements. Thu it is senseless to rebuke a writ of historical monographs, who prime concern is with the organ zation and presentation of a lim ited body of information, for n writing as eloquently as a Gibbo who was trying to do somethin quite different.

We could very well round o the three "R's" by referring " 'rithmetic" or mathematics the language of quantity. Thu all education is in a very re sense nothing else but a kind reading and writing, or an inte pretation and communication of v rious subject matters, whether th be found inscribed in books or the pages of nature. To facilita the realization of this conceptio English departments, on the o hand, must go beyond their pr dominantly aesthetic view of liter ture and composition; and all teac ers, on the other hand, must stud practice, and teach more consisten ly the arts of communication general, and more especially tho of the English language.

Sholom J. Kahn,
College of the City of New York.